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Dedications set for fire stations in CJ, O'Brien

Dedications for two new stations will be held during the next two Saturdays by Illinois Valley Fire District.

Station 1 in Cave Junction will be dedicated Aug. 6. Station 3 in O'Brien will be dedicated Aug. 13. The programs will begin at 11 a.m.

Station 2 in Selma was dedicated to the late Firefighter Kent Johnson during a ceremony July 4.

Fire season precaution levels high

Prolonged hot, dry weather throughout Southwest Oregon prompted increased fire restrictions on land protected by the Oregon Dept. of Forestry's (ODF) Southwest Oregon District, based in Central Point.

The industrial Fire Precaution Level (IFPL) climbed to "Level 2" at 12:01 a.m. Thursday, July 28. The public fire precaution level remains "High" (yellow). However, chain-saws, mowers and other power-driven equipment may be used during early morning and late evening hours.

These restrictions affect state, county, private, and Bureau of Land Management land in Jackson and Josephine counties. Under IFPL 2, the following restrictions are in place as of July 28:

*Commercial operators on forestland are required to have fire suppression equipment on site and provide watchman service.

*The use of fire in any

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Following are the high-and-low temperatures recorded in O'Brien by Cheryl & Harry Johnson.

*Fri., July 22: 98-60

*Sat., July 23: 100-59

*Sun., July 24: 96-57

*Mon., July 25: 92-56

*Tues., July 26: 106-56

*Wed., July 27: 100-61

*Thurs., July 28: 102-59

(Editor's Note: The Evergreen Federal Bank temperature sign in Downtown Cave Junction read 110 degrees one day last week, with 105 to 108 being common.)

Weather Watch

Illinois Valley

Wednesday, August 3

Sunny

High--91, Low--55



Thursday, August 4

More Sun

High--94, Low--54



Friday, August 5

Summertime Sun

High--94, Low--55



Saturday, August 6

Hot & Sunny

High--96, Low--55



Sunday, August 7

Clear & Hot

High--97 Low--54



Monday, August 8

Splendid Sunshine

High--97 Low--50



Tuesday, August 9

Mostly Sunny

High--92 Low--45



EIGHT DOLLAR Road and the Fiddler Fire Salvage area from the 2002 Biscuit Fire were reopened to the public Monday, Aug. 1. The U.S. Forest Service and persons associated with the Oxygen Collective took separate, individual tours into the area, although the groups met and viewed together peacefully. Photos (from top) show sale administrator Cliff Phillips (right) pointing out logged areas some 8.5 miles from Illinois River green bridge to illustrate how vegetation returns prior to reforestation, as the area above the road was helicopter-logged some three months ago, and an adjacent area was clear-cut in 1970; from the same vantage point, I.V. District Ranger Pam Bode (right) gestures toward an area where harvesting was completed Wednesday, July 27. The next photo shows a boy at the Baby Foot Lake Trailhead, approximately 12.6 miles from the green bridge, an area that was part of the salvage logging and among bones of contention for anti-logging activists. Bode explained the rationale for salvaging there, noting that the trees were dead and a potential danger if left standing. She also explained that the area was severely burned. Below, Bode indicates a possible timber sale area at Mike's Gulch about 3 miles from the bridge, pointing to an area just below the road that was logged in March, noting that vegetation has returned. Final photo shows the most recently logged area viewed from the second photo site. Debris removal is planned. The Fiddler Sale harvested 12.2 million board feet of burned timber, although 1.4.4 mbf was scheduled. Related story on page 8. (Photos by 'I.V. News')

CJ couple staggered by county tax bill for 'house that never was'

By MICHELLE BINKER
Staff Writer

In 1995, Larry and Kathy Jones bought a parcel of Illinois Valley real estate; moved themselves and their stuff up from Southern California; and began to build their home.

In December that year, a completion certificate from the Josephine County Building Dept. was in their hands.

When the first property tax bill came due, they were still quite happy.

"We had always heard that Oregon was cheaper than California," Jones said. "The statement listed dwellings and improvements and so forth, and the total was reasonable, so I thought, 'Great!'"

What the Joneses didn't realize was that the home on Dick George Road had never actually been added to the tax rolls. "In effect," Jones said, "it's the house that never was."

That is until about a month ago -- 9 1/2 years after the house was finished -- when a field worker from the county assessor's office appeared on the property.

"Gee, you have a house here," she said," Kathy recalled. 'And a shop'."

The worker measured everything, and took photographs to document size and

amenities of the structures.

"She even measured the concrete walks, because you have to pay for every foot of that, too," Jones snorted.

As a result of the county discovering its oversight, the Jones have been hit with a property tax bill this year which is approximately \$6,000, a princely sum for the two retirees, who have always paid their taxes on time, they said.

"We've had to refinance our house to pay this bloody bill," Jones said, indignantly. "It's a real hardship for us, to come up with this money."

Coming due at the same time as a regular property-tax bill, theirs includes the current year plus the previous five; the maximum allowable under Oregon law.

"It's (the county's) mistake," Jones said. "You would think they'd offer us a payment plan or some way to help get it paid."

"We get our tax bill, and we take for granted that they've done their job, like every other taxpayer."

"How many other people has this happened to?" Jones wondered.

About one or two per year, said Michael Schneyder, Josephine County assessor.

"There are an awful lot

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From firewood to classy furniture, 'Delbert' rules

By COURTNEY CHRISTIANSON,
and JESSEA MUCHA

Delbert Kauffman has lived in this valley for more than 30 years.

He is an entrepreneur, who started out cutting firewood when he first arrived. His career has evolved into a successful business manufacturing high-end log furniture from his shop in Kerby.

"Well, I started out cutting firewood, which I did for a few years," he recalled. "From that I moved into horse logging. I did that off and on for about 25 years. We bought our first team around 1970 or so."

"Our operation was more of a quasi-vocation than anything. We had a team of horses and mules and went out in the woods occasionally."

"At the same time," said Kauffman, "we were building log structures and had a pole-peeling operation. We used the horses to bring in the product for ourselves. Only once in a while did we actually log timber to sell."

"The best we ever did was about 5,000 board feet per day, which is equal to about one truckload. As far as actual production per man-hour was concerned, we were pathetic."

"We did significantly less damage to the environment through horse logging, simply because we were incapable of doing so," he said.

"It's just like four-wheel drive will leave a bigger footprint than a bicycle," Kauffman noted. "It has nothing to do with the morality of the driver. Horse logging does appeal to those

who are environmentally minded, but it wouldn't work to pass legislation that says horses must do all logging. It would be impossible to keep up with demand."

"I would like to think that in an ideal world there would be a place for horse loggers, but that's just not practical. Horse loggers are always living on the edge, trying to get by. In the end, I gave it up because I had a family and I would have had to go and camp out if I wanted to keep doing it."

Kauffman continued: "Over time the buildings and furniture aspects got bigger and bigger. Pretty soon the horses stayed in the corral and ate us out of house and home. They had become my pets. My wife eventually made me sell them a few years ago."

"I got started doing log furniture by building our log home. We did it out of logs mainly because we couldn't borrow money to build a conventional home. This got me into logs, and I started building things out of them. It's been one accidental turn after another."

"When I started with log furniture, we logged our own product. We would go out with horses and log it and then bring it back with a Bobcat that we owned in those days."

"After a while, it became clear that it cost more money to log it than to buy it. We would buy from 'wood-gleaner' types. These people will gather what they can from the forest, whether it's lumber or mushrooms and such, and sell what they can."

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